



**DATE:** **Revised December 20, 2021**  
**Revised September 28, 2021**  
**June 25, 2021**

**OPERATIONS MEMORANDUM #21-06-01**

**SUBJECT:** **Revised** - Temporary Changes to Interview Requirements for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Applications Due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Emergency

**TO:** Executive Directors

**FROM:** Robert Patrick  
Acting Director  
Bureau of Operations

**PURPOSE**

To inform County Assistance Offices (CAOs) about temporary changes to SNAP interviews for applications due to the COVID-19 emergency. These changes are effective July 1, 2021 and will remain in effect through ~~December 31, 2021~~ **January 31, 2022**.

**BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION**

The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) has approved a waiver request submitted by the department to waive the requirements that an interview be completed before issuing Expedited SNAP (EXFS) and ongoing SNAP at application. FNS has also waived the requirement to offer a face-to-face interview or grant a request for a face-to-face interview. If a client requests a face-to-face interview, the caseworker should inform the client that at this time interviews are being waived for SNAP benefits at application.

**NOTE:** Interviews for Renewals are required and should be scheduled when sending out the renewal packet.

During this waived period, caseworkers should attempt contact with the client to gather more information if there is information that needs to be clarified. If contact to

clarify unclear information is unsuccessful, the caseworker should pend for that information. Caseworkers should follow verification guidance in SNAP Handbook section 578.32.

**NOTE:** Caseworkers should not be sending the Notice of Missed Interview or failing any cases 047 – Failure to Interview for applications during this time.

### **Instructions for Processing SNAP benefits with waived interviews**

#### Application – Eligible for EXFS, pending ongoing

1. Process the case normally, marking the interview question on the Program Request Questions screen as 'no'.
2. Continue through the case pending for required information.
3. Issue EXFS, pend ongoing.
4. Process ongoing benefits when required information is received. Change the answer to the interview question on Program Request Questions to 'yes'.
5. On the SNAP Budget Authorization screen enter Interview Code 'Application Interview Waived'.
6. Before submitting, in case comments, enter 'The interview for this application has been waived per FNS guidance due to COVID-19'.

#### Application – Eligible for EXFS and ongoing OR Ineligible for EXFS and able to process ongoing – same workflow

1. Process the case normally, marking the interview question on the Program Request Questions screen as 'yes'.
2. On the SNAP Budget Authorization screen enter Interview Code 'Application Interview Waived'.
3. Before submitting, in case comments, enter 'The interview for this application has been waived per FNS guidance due to COVID-19'.

#### Application – Ineligible for EXFS, pending ongoing

1. Process the case normally, marking the interview question on the Program Request Questions screen as 'yes'.

2. Continue through the case pending for required information.
3. Stop and unlock case on SNAP Budget Authorization.
4. Process ongoing benefits when required information is received.
5. On the SNAP Budget Authorization screen enter Interview Code 'Application Interview Waived'.
6. Before submitting, in case comments, enter 'The interview for this application has been waived per FNS guidance due to the COVID-19'.

**NEXT STEPS**

1. Share and review this information with appropriate staff members.
2. Direct questions regarding this Operations Memorandum to your Area Manager.
3. This Operations Memorandum is in effect until ~~December 31, 2021~~ **January 31, 2022**.